

## Irlen® opens first Nevada office



The Irlen® Method has been used for more than 25 years to identify and help people with a processing problem called Irlen Syndrome, formerly known as Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome (SSS). Irlen Syndrome is not an optical problem, but rather a problem with the brain's ability to process visual information. It manifests in various ways, including light sensitivity, eye strain, fatigue, difficulty reading or copying, poor depth perception, etc.

The Syndrome tends to run in families and is not currently identified by other standardized educational or medical tests. Individuals are identified using Irlen's comprehensive screening protocols. Colored overlays are frequently the only intervention needed. Some clients may benefit from spectral filters (worn as glasses or contact lenses).

Irlen Diagnostician Shanda Badger recently opened an office in Las Vegas at 8879 W. Flamingo Rd. #110 (between El Capitan and Durango, near I-215), offering initial screenings for Irlen Syndrome and full evaluation for Irlen Spectral Filters. Shanda offers low-income and family discounts, plus a 20 percent discount on filter evaluation through December. Contact Shanda at 702/609-8004, [badgers@yahoo.com](mailto:badgers@yahoo.com), [www.irlennevada.com](http://www.irlennevada.com).

Irlen Syndrome can affect many different areas — including academic and work performance, behavior, attention, ability to sit still, and concentration — evidenced in adult education classrooms. Several of Nevada's AEFLA-funded adult education programs have trained Irlen screeners, who can prescribe the overlays for students; see <http://nvedu.org/ldsupport>.

## High-flying angel transports U.S. presidents

*Editor's note: A 74-year-old gentleman heard we were seeking stories of GED recipients.*

*Although he has asked to remain anonymous, he agreed to share his story.*

I dropped out of my senior year in high school in 1956 and went to work in a paper mill. A year later, I was laid off and decided to join the Air Force. Upon arrival at my permanent duty station, I was told by the education office that if I wanted to be promoted, I would need my GED certificate. I took the test, passed with good scores, and within three months was awarded my High School Equivalency Diploma.

In 1962 I was accepted for a flight position in the elite 1254<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Wing in Washington, DC. I interfaced on a personal basis with high level government officials, transporting presidents, vice presidents, congressmen, and foreign dignitaries all over the United States and the world.

Sadly, in 1963 I was in the rear galley on Air Force One as it was dismantled so that President Kennedy's casket would not have to ride in the cargo hold of the plane. A happier occasion nine years later found me with President Nixon on his 1972 visit to China, where I attended the state dinner in the Great Hall.

I continued my career for more than 20 years with Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter. During this time, I took advantage of continuing education courses offered by the Air Force, including training as a government contracting officer.

After retiring in 1981, I applied for a job with a major aircraft manufacturer. Along with my résumé I included letters of recommendation and commendation from various former presidents. By 1985 I was the contracts manager for the deployment of the MX missile program in Cheyenne, WY. I was quite surprised at my selection as I did not have a college degree, but my GED and about three years of college credits were sufficient. I retired from the company in 1996 and have been enjoying my retirement ever since.



**"Education is the key to success. There is no question in my mind that obtaining my GED was the key that opened the doors to my career."**

*This high-flying angel heard about the work that the Community Multicultural Center is doing and became a significant financial contributor, helping a new generation of adult students proceed on their paths to success.*



## U.S. DOE re-launches LINCS

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education recently re-launched [LINCS](http://lincs.ed.gov) (Literacy Information and Communication System, <http://lincs.ed.gov>), an online professional learning community for adult educators. The site provides adult educators access to:

- quality, evidence-based resources
- on-demand, Web-based professional development opportunities, including online courses and targeted face-to-face trainings
- a connected network of practitioners, called a “community of practice”
- specialized tools, including the ability for educators across the country to engage in real-time discussions

One of the key features of the website is the “LINCS Community,” which includes 16 topic-area groups. These virtual community groups provide an opportunity to engage in topic-specific networking and information-sharing activities. By engaging in a group, educators are able to share and obtain real-time answers to peer-driven questions based on their collective professional experiences.

**We want adult educators to use LINCS to improve their practice and connect with peers and experts. We believe that a professionalized teaching workforce and high-quality professional development are key to improving program effectiveness and raising student outcomes so that more adults can complete college or training.**

**—Assistant Secretary for  
Vocational and Adult Education  
Brenda Dann-Messier**

## Adult College Completion Tool Kit released

It is evident that to ensure our nation's prosperity in a highly competitive global arena, the U.S. must increase the overall rates and levels of educational attainment of its citizenry. Adult learners must succeed in postsecondary education in ever greater numbers. Yet, approximately two-thirds of adults age 25 and older do not persist in postsecondary education long enough to earn a credential, and many others do not even enroll. For adults with low literacy and numeracy skills and those learning English as a second language, the transition to and completion of postsecondary education and training can be even more difficult.

With these issues and goals in mind, the Office of Vocational and Adult Education developed the [Adult College Completion Tool Kit](#) to help policymakers at the state and local levels implement practical, evidence-based solutions that increase the number of graduates who earn the high-quality degrees and certificates required to compete for jobs paying family-sustaining wages.

Designed to connect state administrators and local practitioners to strategies, resources, and technical assistance tools, the Tool Kit is organized by three key areas: access, quality, and completion. Each section provides information to enhance and support state adult education administrators, local adult education practitioners, and adult education students in their efforts to increase the number of adults who complete at least one year of higher education or training. The information is aligned with the needs of four critical student populations — veterans, adult basic education students, incarcerated individuals, and high-skill immigrants. Download from <http://nvedu.org/9>.

## Build resilience — by wasting time!

By Susan H. Aaron, GED/ESL instructor,  
CSN, [susan.aaron@csn.edu](mailto:susan.aaron@csn.edu)

Why has game designer Jane McGonigal, writing in [Harvard Business Review's online magazine](#), made it a goal to waste at least four minutes every hour throughout the day?

McGonigal summarizes the research she has uncovered on practices that make people more resourceful problem solvers, more collaborative, and less likely to give up when things get tough — all helpful tools for our adult learning community.

Resilience, or the ability to rebound from life's tough twists, is reflected in four areas — physical, mental, emotional, and social — that can be developed with activities that appear to fritter away time.

McGonigal offers tips we can immediately put into practice in each of the four areas, and encourages us to incorporate them in our own organizations.

Bob Henry, Director of Adult Education for the Clark County School District and NAE President, says, “We often talk of the need for our students to be resilient. We talk about how to build resilience. As educators, we can use these concepts to improve our own resilience, and perhaps model some things to help our students improve their resilience.”

Thanks, Bob, for directing us to this article, which can be found at <http://nvae.us/6z>.

# The world at work

McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) recently released [\*The World at Work: Jobs, Pay and Skills for 3.5 Billion People\*](#), a report analyzing dramatic shifts in global labor markets that have occurred over the last several decades, which have caused increasingly stark skill and wage gaps across the world.

MGI estimates there will be 1.5 million too few workers with college or graduate degrees in the U.S. by 2020. Increasing the supply of high-skill workers that employers demand will require sustained efforts in two areas: sharply raising college completion rates (both among young people and adults who need additional training to be competitive for medium- and high-skill jobs) and increasing the participation of high-skill workers in the labor force. Increasing employment opportunities for the remaining low- and medium-skill workers who are not able to complete a college degree or postsecondary training program will also help relieve the workforce deficit.

MGI argues that the traditional models of education and workforce development will need to be transformed worldwide in order to address the increasing skill gaps. Innovative delivery of education and training services is needed to raise the productivity of the education sector and maximize scarce resources.

MGI's global agenda to upgrade the skill level of the labor force over the next two decades involves three key strategies:

- Align education with employment demand, focusing on key STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields that face growing worker shortages;
- Focus on creating a comprehensive system of job-relevant career and technical education with smooth school-to-work pathways; and
- Utilize online learning and interactive technologies to reach millions of students at low cost, transforming the traditional role of the classroom as well as the educational experience of students.

MGI also calls for the private sector to “ante up” with investments, policies, initiatives, and involvement in education.

As the economy continues to evolve and the demand shifts for particular kinds of labor, a comprehensive and coordinated effort will be needed to mitigate the impact of rising skill gaps that will likely create large imbalances and have huge social and economic costs. Policymakers, educators, business leaders, and workers themselves must find ways to bring education, training, and job creation into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The report, as well as a podcast, slideshow, and other information, can be found at <http://nvae.us/75>.

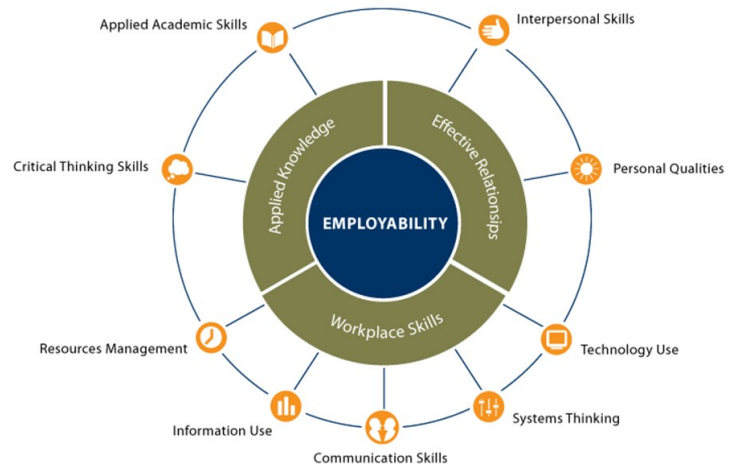
## Just what are employability skills?

Many policymakers, educators and employers are interested in employability skills as a critical component of preparing young people and adults both for the workforce and postsecondary education. But just what are employability skills?

OVAE (Office of Vocational and Adult Education) convened a working group to explore the range of definitions used in the education, workforce development, and business communities. MPR Associates, as part of the Support for States' Employability Standards in Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Adult Education project, worked with the group to compile an inventory of definitions, assessments, and resources already in use.

From this inventory MPR highlighted the commonalities across definitions and categorized them into three main topics: applied knowledge, workplace skills, and effective relationships. MPR also developed a framework with these three main areas at its core.

The Employability Skills Framework at <http://cte.ed.gov/employabilityskills> is an interactive site, allowing users to compare training models, create a customized assessment comparison worksheet, and view practical examples of employability skills. The site also includes a library of other federal resources and links to research on the topic.



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## Key upcoming conferences

**What:** COABE Conference, March 24-28, New Orleans, LA

**Contact:** [www.coabe.org](http://www.coabe.org)

**What:** MPAEA Conference, April 9-12, Cheyenne, WY

**Contact:** [www.mpaea.org](http://www.mpaea.org)

**What:** National Conference on Family Literacy, April 28-30, Louisville, KY

**Contact:** <http://www.famlit.org/conference/>

**What:** VALUEUSA Adult Learner Leadership Inst., May 6-8, Washington, DC

**Contact:** [www.valueusa.org](http://www.valueusa.org)

**What:** NAWDP Conference, May 19-22, Minneapolis, MN

**Contact:** [www.nawdp.org](http://www.nawdp.org)

**What:** CASAS National Summer Institute, June 11-13, San Diego, CA

**Contact:** <http://www.casas.org/training-and-support/SI>

**What:** National Career Pathways Network Conference, Oct 13-15, San Antonio, TX

**Contact:** [www.ncpn.info](http://www.ncpn.info)



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